Developing a Framework

For the Adoption of

Open Resources

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What are Open Digital Resources?

Open Digital Resources are items that may be shared with your patrons without the need for an individual or library subscription. Examples of Open Digital Resources that may be of use to public librarians include State Library Websites, Online Digital Archives such as Archive.org and DPLA, and sites created by State and Federal governments, museums and educational institutions.
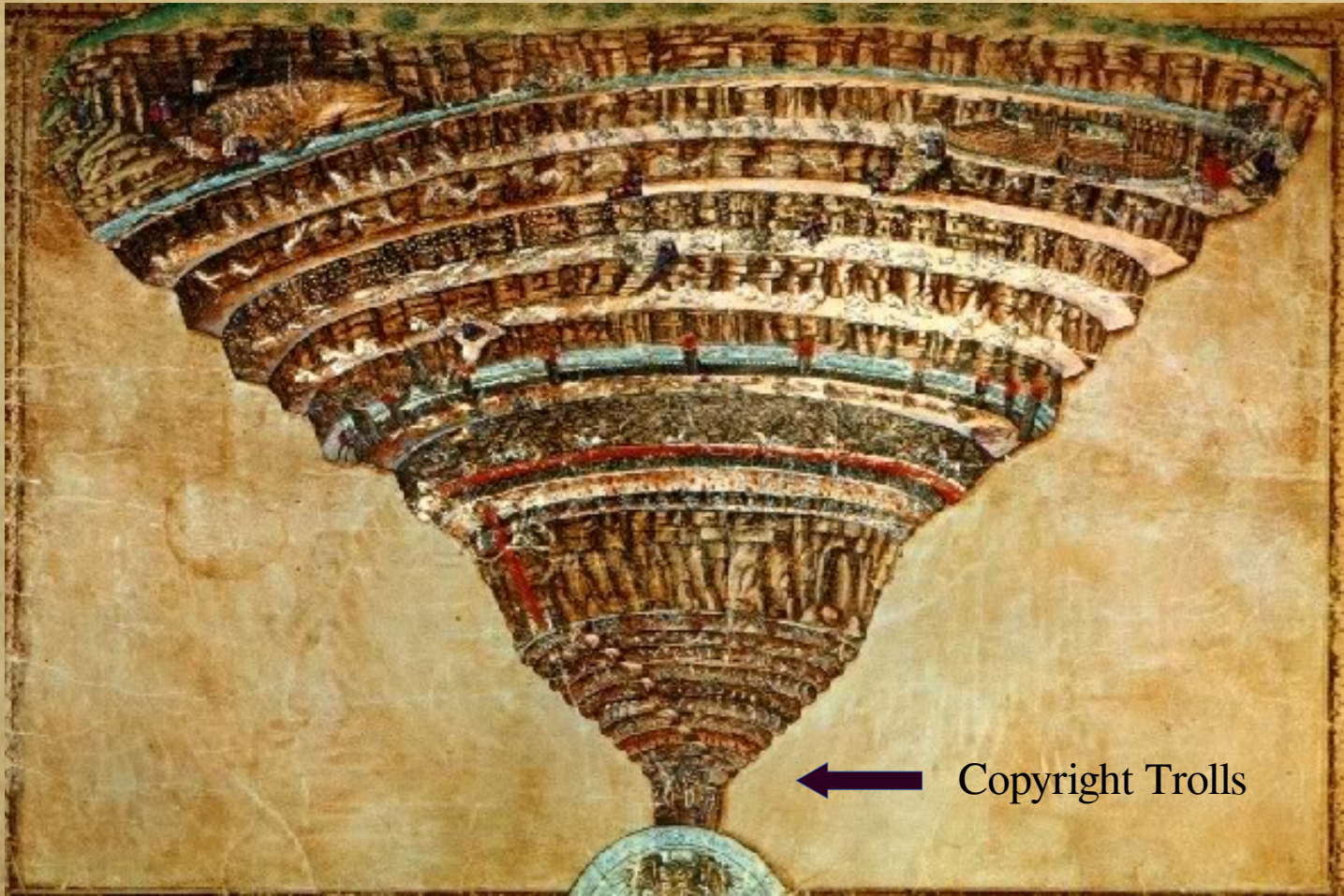
Title 17 USC

For public libraries copyright issues are much simpler than they are for academic libraries, because we're providing materials for end use, rather than items that will be distributed to a class or included in a journal article. As long as you're just providing a link to a website that is legal, and you're not copying items and keeping the information on your own server, then you're basically in the clear.

Different Types of Copy Protection

- Creative Commons and "copy-left" licenses in a nutshell: these licenses prevent a "copyright troll" from copyrighting your material, then turning around and suing you for royalties on the materials you created.

- Copyrighted but free to use: These materials come from a variety of sources, and are free to download, read and cite. Examples include documents on State Websites, and reports from private sector entities.

They had to revise Dante's Inferno

Copyright Trolls

Pew Center Typologies

	Group name	% of adult population	What you need to know about them
Elite Tech Users (31% of American adults)	Omnivores	8%	They have the most information gadgets and services, which they use voraciously to participate in cyberspace and express themselves online and do a range of Web 2.0 activities such as blogging or managing their own Web pages.
	Connectors	7%	Between featured-packed cell phones and frequent online use, they connect to people and manage digital content using ICTs – all with high levels of satisfaction about how ICTs let them work with community groups and pursue hobbies.
	Lackluster Veterans	8%	They are frequent users of the internet and less avid about cell phones. They are not thrilled with ICT-enabled connectivity.
	Productivity Enhancers	8%	They have strongly positive views about how technology lets them keep up with others, do their jobs, and learn new things.
Middle-of-the-road Tech Users (20%)	Mobile Centrics	10%	They fully embrace the functionality of their cell phones. They use the internet, but not often, and like how ICTs connect them to others.
	Connected But Hassled	10%	They have invested in a lot of technology, but they find the connectivity intrusive and information something of a burden.
Few Tech Assets (49%)	Inexperienced Experimenters	8%	They occasionally take advantage of interactivity, but if they had more experience, they might do more with ICTs.
	Light But Satisfied	15%	They have some technology, but it does not play a central role in their daily lives. They are satisfied with what ICTs do for them.
	Indifferents	11%	Despite having either cell phones or online access, these users use ICTs only intermittently and find connectivity annoying.
	Off the Network	15%	Those with neither cell phones nor internet connectivity tend to be older adults who are content with old media.

Add the "Timid Explorers" category

Elite Users and Open Resources

Omnivores & Connectors: Will probably know more about OR than you do, and will want to talk your ear off about all of their favorites.

Lackluster Veterans: Already know about OR and don't care to discuss it.

Productivity Enhancers: May already know about OR and are only interested if you can show them something that will save time or money.

Middle of the Road Users

Timid Explorers: Older users who enjoy IT and want to learn more. Some started with phones or tablets and moved on to laptops. This group loves finding radio programs, digital museum displays and travel information and will even venture into some basic photo editing and document creation.

Mobile Centrics: I would add e-book readers to this category, as well as those who use their tablets to shop and plan their travels. This group loves their tablets and phones but isn't ready to deal with a laptop or desktop computer.

Connected but hassled: Possibly the largest category of users now. This group tends to be pragmatic, with a focus on performing basic tasks.

Few Tech Assets

This category of users appears to be far smaller than the 49% cited in the 2007 Pew study.

This group tends to show up at the library only when they have an immediate information need and tend to want actionable information and documents, such as items from IRS.gov, online fishing license applications and DMV documents.

Just because it's free doesn't mean it can't hurt you

Selecting a lot of online resources that are either not really of interest to your patrons, or that are written on a very complex reading level can alienate your patrons.

If you're in an area where most of your patrons have an Associate's degree or less, don't inundate them with links to Pubmed, PLOS and the Open Academic Journals Index.

Materials should be interesting and accessible to your patrons. Otherwise they may start to resent your efforts.

Narrowing the Focus

Public libraries should focus on items that offer new efficiencies to Productivity Enhancers, delight Middle of the Road users, and provide basic information for those with few tech assets.

Don't Segregate Your Open Resources

There are multiple ways to share Open Resources in a website. The only thing you shouldn't do is separate resources on a similar topic, and have one list that will come to be regarded as "the real resources", and a separate list for Open Resources. People have a tendency to think the ones you pay for are the "real" ones and the free stuff is second best

Methods of Sharing Open Resources

Database Lists

Library Downloads

Collections Pages

Think Like a Marketer

Try to avoid the trap of being too stuffy and thinking that all of your resources need to look like links from a college textbook. People love historic photos, great music and colorful artwork.

Don't be afraid to give the people what they love.

Navigate Within Sites

Don't feel that you always have to link to a site's homepage.

Sites like DPLA and Archive.org are massive, and contain hundreds of thousands of documents. Don't be afraid to dig down into sections of the site and to provide links to particular pages within a site.

Maintain Political Neutrality

There's a lot of politically motivated information and misinformation on the web. Be careful to vet your resources to ensure they are politically neutral, and to avoid fringe ideologies and general wing-nuttery.

Also, avoid material with advertising content, which can be tricky, some of those advertisers are sneaky.

Four Key Questions

Don't add material to your site unless you can answer yes to both of these questions.

1. Is this material accessible for my patrons?

2. Is this material free from advertising content and fringe wing-nuttery?

Four Key Questions

You should also be able to answer "yes" to at least one of these questions.

3. Does this item pertain to an information need my patrons are likely to encounter?

4. Will this item delight my Middle-of-the-road users?